

Meaning of Sovereignty

The term 'Sovereignty' has been derived from the Latin word "Supremus" which means supreme or paramount. Although the term 'Sovereignty' is modern yet the idea of 'Sovereignty' goes back to Aristotle who spoke of the 'supreme power of the state'. Throughout the Middle Ages the Roman jurists and the civilians kept this idea in their mind and frequently employed the term 'Summa potestas' and 'Plenitudo potestatis' to designate the supreme power of the State. The terms 'Sovereign' and 'Sovereignty' were first used by the French jurists in the 15th century and later they found their way into English, Italian and German political literature. The use of the term 'Sovereignty' in political science dates back to the publication of Bodin's 'The Republic' in 1576.

"The word 'Sovereign', say J.S. Rawls and others, "entered the vocabulary of political theory from the feudal order, wherein it designated a relationship between persons. The term Sovereign had been applicable to any feudal lord with authority over subjects in his own dominions."

